

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 007589

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TBIO, UR

SUBJECT: HEALTH EXCHANGEES: DR. ELMER BALLANTINE AND
DR. PHILIP PODRID (03.30 AND 03.0105)

REFS: A) MOSCOW 18210, B) MOSCOW 18152

1. HEW/OIH APPRECIATES REPORTING CABLE (REF A) ON BALLANTINE'S VISIT. BALLANTINE CONFIRMS ESSENCE OF CABLE AND WILL PROVIDE EMBASSY FULL WRITTEN TRIP REPORT IN NEAR FUTURE THROUGH DEPARTMENT CHANNELS. BALLANTINE ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR EMBASSY COURTESIES DURING STAY IN MOSCOW.

2. HEW/OIH AND NIH CHECKED FURTHER INTO TWO ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS REPORTED IN REF B. OIH SHARES CONCERN OVER SOME OF DR. PODRID'S EXPRESSED PROBLEMS ALTHOUGH DR. PODRID APPEARS, THROUGH INEXPERIENCE, TO HAVE REACTED INAPPROPRIATELY AND MISANALYZED THE SOURCE OF SOME OF HIS PROBLEMS. DR. PODRID ACHIEVED REMARKABLE RESULTS WITH SCIENTIFIC
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ASPECTS OF VISIT WHICH WERE PLANNED BY COORDINATORS. AS EMBASSY NOTES, SOVIET COLLABORATORS WERE MOST FORTHCOMING IN SUPPLYING PATIENT DATA AND MATERIAL FOR HIS STUDY. DR. PODRID'S COMPLAINTS WERE MOSTLY OF PERSONAL NATURE AND A RESULT OF GENERAL FRUSTRATION WITH SOVIET BUREAUCRACY. AS

A VEGETARIAN HE HAD PROBLEMS WITH FOOD AND WAS ALSO DIS-

SATISFIED WITH INITIAL HOUSING ARRANGEMENT UNTIL SOVIETS MOVED HIM. HE WAS MOST DISSATISFIED HOWEVER BY SOVIET LACK OF ATTENTION TO HIM PERSONALLY AND SOCIALLY AND ALSO BUREAUCRATIC INEPTITUDE IN MEETING HIS PERSONAL REQUESTS, E.G. UNSATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISIT TO PAVLOV INSTITUTE AND MOSCOW GENERAL HOSPITAL. HE TOOK THIS ALL VERY PERSONALLY, ALTHOUGH THESE TWO VISITS HAD NOT, REPEAT NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY REQUESTED BY HEW.

BOTH HEW AND MOH HAVE LONG-TIME UNDERSTANDING THAT PERSONAL REQUESTS FOR ADJUSTMENTS IN PLANNED SCHEDULE ARE TO BE ACCOMMODATED ONLY IF HOSTS ARE ABLE. U.S. SYSTEM OBVIOUSLY ALLOWS MUCH MORE FLEXIBILITY IN THIS REGARD BUT HEW ALSO DENIES SOVIET SCIENTIST REQUESTS. MOH HAS FULLY SUPPORTED THIS HEW PREROGATIVE (FYI MOH OFFICIALS PRIVATELY HAVE EXPRESSED AMAZEMENT WITH GRATITUDE FOR FLEXIBILITY IN HEW SCHEDULING SOVIET SCIENTISTS IN USA WHILE ALSO SEEKING HEW UNDERSTANDING ON THEIR CONSTRAINTS SUCH AS ARRANGING VISIT TO ACADEMY OF SCIENCE INSTITUTES LIKE PAVLOV INSTITUTE IN LENINGRAD).

3. RE DR. PODRID'S SUGGESTIONS PER PARA 5 OF REF B, U.S. EXEC SECS OF BILATERAL S&T AGREEMENTS HAVE LONG STRESSED THE NEED TO HAVE FAIRLY FIRM MUTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS ON ITINERARY AND PROGRAM FOR VISITING U.S. SCIENTISTS TO USSR BEFORE REPEAT BEFORE DEPARTURE. U.S. SIDE MUST RECOGNIZE CONFIDENTIAL

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(1) GENERAL DIFFICULTY SOVIETS HAVE IN ARRANGING IN-COUNTRY SCHEDULE FOR U.S. SCIENTISTS ON SHORT NOTICE AND
(2) GENERAL INABILITY OF INDIVIDUAL SCIENTISTS TO NEGOTIATE THEIR SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM WITH SOVIET BUREAUCRACY. WHILE EVERYONE HOPES U.S. SCIENTISTS' REQUESTS WILL BE BETTER ACCOMMODATED IN FUTURE, AND HEW ENCOURAGES ITS EXCHANGEES TO MAKE PERSONAL REQUESTS FOR ADJUSTMENTS THEY SEE AS BENEFICIAL, IT ALSO ALWAYS WARNS EXCHANGEES THAT SOVIET BUREAUCRACY IS GENERALLY INEPT. EXCHANGEES ARE ALSO ADVISED TO CORRESPOND WITH HEW EITHER THROUGH TELEX OR THROUGH EMBASSY IF ADJUSTMENT IN PLANNED SCIENTIFIC WORK IS NECESSARY AND PERSONAL REQUESTS UNMET. IF U.S. COORDINATOR AGREES WITH EXCHANGEER OBSERVATIONS, AN OFFICIAL REQUEST ON TELEX WILL BE SENT TO MOH.

4. RE PARA 6, REF B, HEW INSTRUCTS ALL REPEAT ALL ITS EXCHANGEES TO KEEP IN CONTACT WITH EMBASSY AND ADVISE EMBASSY OF ANY DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED. DR. PODRID WAS SO INSTRUCTED. HE WAS ALSO GIVEN EXCELLENT EMBASSY INFORMATION SHEET FOR LONG-TERM EXCHANGEES WHICH HE UNDERSTOOD

FULLY. ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE SOCIAL ISOLATION HE FELT

IN USSR , IT IS EVEN MORE INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO HEW THAT HE DID NOT SEEK OUT EVEN SOCIAL CONTACTS AT EMBASSY. HE MENTIONED THAT EMBASSY BIG BROTHER PROGRAM WAS NOT FUNCTIONING WHILE HE WAS THERE SO HE DID NOT VISIT EMBASSY AFTER INITIAL DISCUSSIONS. THIS WAS MOST UNFORTUNATE FOR HIM PERSONALLY BUT SOMEWHAT SELF-INFLICTED.

5. HEW/OIH APPRECIATES EMBASSY ROLE IN ASSISTING AMERICAN EXCHANGEES IN USSR AND MORE GENERAL SUPPORT FOR PROGRAMS. PROVISION OF SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LONG-TERM VISITORS OTHERWISE ISOLATED IS PARTICULARLY WELCOME AS WELL AS THE MORE SUBSTANTIVE EMBASSY ADVICE AND ANALYSIS. WITH RESPECT TO INTERVENTION ON BEHALF OF HEW EXCHANGEES SEEKING PROGRAM CHANGES (PARA 6, REF B), HOWEVER, HEW
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REQUESTS THAT ANY SUCH MATTERS BE REFERRED BY EMBASSY TO HEW BEFORE AN APPROACH IS MADE TO THE SOVIETS. THIS PROCEDURE WILL ASSURE CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER PROGRAMS, PERMIT CENTRAL REVIEW OF RECIPROCITY ASPECTS, AND CONFORMS BEST TO MOH DESIRES AS WE UNDERSTAND THEM. IN A TYPICAL CASE HEW WOULD MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO MOH AND, IF RESOLUTION IS NOT FORTHCOMING, REQUEST EMBASSY INTERVENTION.

DR. PODRID'S CASE IS ATYPICAL IN HEW'S EXPERIENCE AS IT WAS SO OUTSTANDING IN SCIENTIFIC TERMS AND YET SO PERSONALLY AND ADMINISTRATIVELY CONFUSED. INTERESTINGLY HE IS ANXIOUS TO RETURN TO USSR IN 1978 OR 1979 TO GATHER MORE DATA. HE FEELS HE LEARNED MUCH TO PREPARE HIMSELF FOR THE NEXT TRIP. CHRISTOPHER

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